

Presentation by Keynote Speaker Dr. Linda Birnbaum, NIEHS Director

Dr. Linda Birnbaum, director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and the National Toxicology Program (NTP), presented her agency's work in environmental health and toxicology and the important role of partnerships in meeting common public health goals. Dr. Birnbaum reviewed initiatives of NIEHS and the NTP, and she encouraged meeting participants to consider how they might work together with these organizations.

Dr. Birnbaum explained that NIEHS is one of 27 institutes and centers that comprise the National Institutes of Health. NIEHS has both intramural and extramural funding programs, with the greatest portion of funding supporting extramural research and training across the nation. The Institute's intramural research division does work in epidemiology, biostatistics, respiratory biology, and molecular carcinogenesis, among other areas. NIEHS works with other institutes, academia, and other government agencies, including collaborations with CDC and NCEH in particular.

Dr. Birnbaum discussed NIEHS' research in breast cancer, air pollution and disease incidence, autism, obesity, and the built environment, and the health effects of a wide array of environmental toxicants. She described a current solicitation for a multidisciplinary research program, and for several centers to support the development of the detailed science needed to compete for a full center grant. She also shared information about NIEHS' Partnerships in Environmental Health initiative, and the Superfund Research Program and its worker training program. She also discussed the NTP as a health and human services program.